(b) whether it is reported that the MIG-AT is still under development and yet to be certified; and

(c) if so, what are Government's views in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) Various options for the acquisition of an AJT are under examination by the Government.

Purchase of Books

†507. SHRI DEVI PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the procedure followed in his Ministry for purchase of books;

(b) the criterion for the selection of the books;

(c) the proportion of the different subjects to which these books are related;

(d) the ratio of Hindi and English books;

(e) the estimated cost likely to be incurred on purchase of books during financial year; and

(f) whether any incentive programmes or cultural functions are organised to create interest in reading of books among the employees of ministry and defence personnel?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Based on the recommendations of officers, both civilian and Service, as also reviews available, the Book Selection Committee of the Ministry of Defence purchases the books.

(c) Subjects covering security, strategic planning, military affairs, warfare, arms, etc. constitute the main bulk of these purchases. No ratio for purchase of books on a particular subject, has been fixed.

(d) The ratio of Hindi and English books is roughly 2:3.

(e) Appropriately about two-third of the annual budget grant for the Ministry of Defence Library is spent on books every year. Rs. 6,43,774/were spent on books last year.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(f) Circulation of new editions, display of jacket covers of new books, exhibition of books constitute the main thrust in propagating book reading habit among the employees in the Ministry of Defence.

New Battalions of Rashtriya Fifles

508. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a plan to raise 30 new battalions of the Rashtriya Rifles with over 25,000 troops;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the anticipated expenditure, recurring and non-recurring, on the new establishment; and

(d) whether this avoidable expenditure cannot be diverted for development projects in the country where starvation and death are on increase?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (d) Government have approved, in principle, a proposal to raise thirty new battalions of Rashtriya Rifles over a period of five years, six battalions per year commencing from 2001-2002 to 2004-2005, subject to an annual review each year prior to the actual raisings. These new battalions are being raised for relieving the regular army units which have been deployed for counter insurgency duties along side the para military forces in the J&K State. The anticipated expenditure for these planned raisings is Rs. 575 crore initialy and Rs. 545 crore for annual maintenance. This expenditure is not avoidable in the context of the security imperatives that face the nation. However, this expenditure is not at the cost of development projects which are funded in their own right and priority.

Time Frame for Trial Test of Kaveri Engine

509. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any item frame has been fixed for trial testing of Kaveri engine which powers the LCA;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) to what extent the engine is indigenous and what are the foreign components that are still used in the Kaveri engine?